

CONSUMER ALERT NEWS RELEASE

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February 10, 2015

SCAM ARTISTS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF RECENT ANTHEM DATA BREACH

BISMARCK, ND – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem warns North Dakota residents that scam artists are taking advantage of the recent data breach at Anthem, Inc., which services the Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance networks nationwide.

Scam artists are now sending out emails claiming to be from Anthem, offering free credit monitoring for its customers. The phony email includes a link to a supposed credit monitoring service and requires a social security number to be entered. In fact, the credit monitoring service in the email is a fake, and any information entered on the phony website goes straight to the scam artists.

Anthem issued a statement that it is using regular mail only, not email, to notify those affected individuals.

As hackers get more sophisticated, data breaches are becoming more frequent. To protect from scammers taking advantage of these breaches, Stenehjem offers the following tips:

- Companies send data breach notifications via regular mail to the mailing address they have on file for you, not by email or telephone.
- If you receive a telephone message about a data breach, ignore it - even if it includes an offer of free credit monitoring or credit protection services for "victims."
- Don't respond to an email claiming to be notifying you of a security breach and don't click on any links or open attachments that come with the email.
- Consider placing a credit security freeze on your record. A credit security freeze prevents a scam artist from using a stolen social security number to open new credit cards and loan accounts. More information about credit security freezes is available at <http://www.ag.nd.gov/CPAT/SecurityFreeze.htm>.

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